



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 8**

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January 20, 2005

Ref: 8EPR-SR

Ms. Andrine Pederson
179 Forest Avenue
Libby, MT 59923

RE: Ms. Ruby Hagner, 409 East 8th Street

Dear Ms. Pederson:

Wendy Thomi forwarded me your letter dated December 9, 2004 regarding cleanup of Ms. Ruby Hagner's home. I am the project manager for the Libby cleanup. I apologize it's taken us a month to respond, but the holidays seem to slow things down a bit.

We are working to clean up Ms. Hagner's home this year. We appreciate her situation and her need to get the cleanup completed quickly. Unfortunately, we cannot start cleanup immediately – there are many steps that have to occur from start to finish. This requires at least a few months lead time. Ms. Hagner is not alone in her need to get cleanup done quickly. We receive dozens of requests for expedited cleanup and most of them have merit. We are currently planning for approximately 170 cleanups this year, many of them based on special situations or requests. However, we simply cannot meet everyone's need. We are doing our best to get the cleanup done quickly.

You can assure Ms. Hagner that we rarely require personal possessions to be destroyed. Sometimes this approach makes sense, but we generally discuss this with the homeowner. We will work with Ruby on how her possessions are dealt with and will prepare a work plan specific to her property that spells out exactly what will happen. Work will not begin until Ms. Hagner is comfortable and signs the work plan. Our primary goal is to make the homes in Libby safe, but we also respect everyone's right to deal with their own property as they see fit.

Our field team will continue to work with Ms. Hagner as the cleanup grows closer. I cannot give you an exact date of the cleanup, but it is planned for this year. We will give an exact date to Ms. Hagner about one month prior to the cleanup. If you have any questions, please contact the EPA Information Center in Libby at 293-6194. I appreciate your concern for Ms. Hagner.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "JCE", written over a horizontal line.

Jim Christiansen
Remedial Project Manager

